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TO ALL DIPLOMATIC AND CONSULAR POSTS COLLECTIVE IMMEDIATE

RUEHTRO/AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI IMMEDIATE 4981

INFO RUESBKC/ATO ASIA IMMEDIATE 1791

RHEHNSC/NSC WASHINGTON DC IMMEDIATE 2395

RUEATRS/TREASURY DEPT WASHINGTON DC IMMEDIATE 0054

RUEHPH/CDC ATLANTA IMMEDIATE 7233

RUCPDIR/ALL USDOC DISTDIR COLLECTIVE WASHINGTON DC IMMEDIATE

RUEAHQA/HQ USAF WASHINGTON DC//XOXXI// IMMEDIATE

RHMFIIU/HQ AFOSI DOQ ANDREWS AFB MD//IVOA// IMMEDIATE

RHMCSUU/FAA NATIONAL HQ WASHINGTON DC//ACI-400// IMMEDIATE

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RHMFIS/USCENTCOM MACDILL AFB FL//CCJ2-JIT// IMMEDIATE

RUCPCIM/CIMS NTDB WASHINGTON DC IMMEDIATE

RULSJGI/COGARD INTELCOORDCEN WASHINGTON DC IMMEDIATE

RHHMUNA/USPACOM HONOLULU HI IMMEDIATE

RHMFIS/CDR USSOUTHCOM MIAMI FL IMMEDIATE

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TAGS: [CASC](#) [PTER](#) [AMGT](#) [ASEC](#) [IS](#) [GZ](#) [WE](#)

SUBJECT: TRAVEL ALERT - ISRAEL, THE WEST BANK AND GAZA

1. The Department of State alerts U.S. citizens that the Israel Defense Force (IDF) is engaged in a military operation against terrorist organizations in the Gaza Strip. This operation began on December 27, 2008, with aerial and naval bombardment, and expanded on January 3, 2009, to include ground operations. Since the December 19, 2008, expiration of a ceasefire between Israel and Hamas, terrorist organizations have launched ongoing rocket and mortar attacks from Gaza into southern Israel. The Department of State urges U.S. citizens traveling to and within Israel and the West Bank to maintain a high level of vigilance and take appropriate steps to increase their security awareness. No official U.S. Government travel is permitted within the Gaza Strip. Due to the ongoing conflict and limited ability of the U.S. Government to assist American citizens in the Gaza Strip, the Department of State urges American citizens, including journalists and aid workers, to avoid all travel to the Gaza Strip. This Travel Alert expires on January 31, 2009.

2. U.S. Government employees, including those on temporary duty, currently are restricted from travelling within a 30 kilometer radius of the Gaza Strip, inside of which the vast majority of rockets and mortars have fallen. The Embassy's Regional Security Office must approve any travel of U.S. Embassy employees inside the 30 kilometer radius. Some longer range rockets have landed in Yavne, north of Ashdod, and as far east as Beersheva. The Government of Israel's Home Front Command has ordered residents of all communities within 40 kilometers of the Gaza Strip, including Beersheva, Yavne, and Gadera, to take precautions against the possibility of rocket strikes. Schools are currently closed and provision of some public services has been scaled back in areas considered to be within rocket range. American citizens staying within rocket range should also take appropriate precautions and security measures, which may include staying within a certain

distance of a sheltered space and remaining in that space for five minutes after a rocket alert sounds. Specific guidance in English is available at the Home Front Command website: <http://www.oref.org.il/934-en/PAKAR.aspx>

¶3. Within Israel and the West Bank, planned and spontaneous protests against the military actions in Gaza have the potential to turn violent. Security forces have used tear gas and fired shots in the air to control such incidents. American citizens should remain alert and avoid gatherings of protesters and police. Due to these spontaneous demonstrations, U.S. Embassy employees have been advised to avoid traveling on Highway 65 in the Wadi Ara area between Highway 6 and Highway 66, which is near Um-El-Fahm and en route to Afula. Demonstrations can occur with little or no warning and make traffic unpredictable; demonstrators have also thrown stones at passing vehicles.

¶4. Because the current security environment throughout Israel and the West Bank remains unpredictable, U.S. Government employee security measures may be amended at any time including increasing travel restrictions, adding travel bans, relocating U.S. Government staff and contractors to safer areas, or imposing additional restrictions on visiting public places.

¶5. Americans in Israel, the West Bank, and Gaza should be vigilant about security at all times. They should monitor local news, vary their routes and times, and consider the level of security when visiting crowded public places, such as shopping malls, hotels, restaurants, or entertainment venues. Some American citizens in Gaza and their immediate

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family members were assisted in departing Gaza on January 2, 2009. American citizens remaining in Gaza should consider notifying the Consulate General in Jerusalem at the address below of their whereabouts in the event they wish to participate in possible future evacuations of foreign nationals from the Gaza Strip.

¶6. American citizens are advised to maintain valid travel documents and register with the Department of State or U.S. Embassy Tel Aviv/U.S. Consulate Jerusalem through the State Department's travel registration website, <https://travelregistration.state.gov>. By registering, American citizens make it easier for the Embassy and the Consulate to contact them in case of emergency. The U.S. Embassy is located at 71 Hayarkon Street, Tel Aviv 63903. The U.S. Consulate General in Jerusalem is located at 27 Nablus Road, Jerusalem 94190.

#### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION RESOURCES

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¶7. American citizens traveling abroad should regularly monitor:

- \* U.S. Embassy Tel Aviv's Web page, <http://usembassy-israel.org.il/consular/acs/TravelInformation.aspx>, for the latest Warden Message;

- \* U.S. Consulate General Jerusalem's Web page, <http://jerusalem.usconsulate.gov> for its latest Warden Message, and

- \* The U.S. Department of State's, Bureau of Consular Affairs' Web site, [www.travel.state.gov](http://www.travel.state.gov).

These links provide access to:

- \* The current Worldwide Caution;
- \* Travel Warnings, including the Travel Warning for Israel, West Bank and Gaza, and Travel Alerts;
- \* Country-Specific Information; and
- \* Other resources, such as information about U.S. passports and visas.

¶8. For American citizens living and traveling abroad, we encourage you to review valuable security information

contained in "A Safe Trip Abroad" at  
[http://travel.state.gov/travel/tips/safety/sa\\_fety\\_1747.html](http://travel.state.gov/travel/tips/safety/sa_fety_1747.html)

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Other Sources of Information:  
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¶9. Travelers may obtain up-to-date information on security conditions by calling 1-888-407-4747 toll-free in the United States and Canada, or outside the United States and Canada on a regular toll line at 1-202-501-4444. These telephone numbers are available from 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. Eastern Time, Monday through Friday (except U.S. Federal holidays).

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Emergency Numbers/Inquiries:  
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¶10. In the event of an emergency, contact the Police at 100 or Fire at 102, as appropriate.

Should you need specific assistance from American Citizens Services at the U.S. Embassy in Tel Aviv:

\* During office hours (7:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.), call our switchboard at 03-519-7575.

\* For after hours emergencies, call 03-519-7551; your call will be transferred to the Embassy duty officer.

Should you need specific assistance from American Citizens Services at the U.S. Consulate General in Jerusalem:

\* During office hours, call 02-628-7137.

\* For after hours emergencies, call 02-622-7250.

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Routine Inquiries and Subscription to Informational E-mails:

\* For routine American Citizen Services inquiries in Tel Aviv, e-mail [AMCTelAviv@state.gov](mailto:AMCTelAviv@state.gov).

\* For routine American Citizen Services inquiries in Jerusalem, e-mail [JerusalemACS@state.gov](mailto:JerusalemACS@state.gov).

\* To subscribe to Warden Messages and other informational e-mails from U.S. Embassy Tel Aviv, go to <http://usembassy-israel.org.il/consular/acs/index.aspx> and enter your email address, click "subscribe" and then click "Do it".

¶11. Minimize considered.  
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